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SUBJECT: SECURITY SERVICES ON ALERT AFTER AL QAIDA VIDEOS  
THREATEN GERMANY

REF: BERLIN 862

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11. SUMMARY: German security services are on alert following the appearance of two new Al Qaida videos featuring a dual German-Moroccan citizen who threatens Germany with repercussions if German voters do not vote in the upcoming federal elections for a new government that will withdraw German forces from Afghanistan. The threats are reminiscent of the 11 March 2004 terrorist attacks in Madrid that reportedly influenced the Spanish parliamentary elections and ultimately led to a withdrawal of Spanish military forces from Iraq. German authorities are taking the threat very seriously and have increased their presence at airports, train stations, and other public venues. End Summary.

12. On September 18, media reported on the appearance of a 27-minute long video entitled "Security - a Shared Fate" on multiple Islamist extremist websites featuring Bekay Harrach, a 32-year old dual German-Moroccan citizen. Harrach has appeared in several Al Qaida videos over the past year and security authorities believe he is located in the Afghanistan-Pakistan border regions. Speaking in German, Harrach states that "If the people choose to continue the war, they have passed judgment on themselves. The parliamentary election is the only opportunity for the people to influence its country's politics. When the last German soldier is withdrawn from Afghanistan, the last mujahedeen will be withdrawn from Germany." Harrach continues: "If, however, the German people do not want to induce the majority of the parties up for election to withdraw the soldiers from Afghanistan, then there will be a terrible awakening after the election."

13. German security services are taking this most recent threat very seriously and have further added to already

enhanced pre-election security measures. Federal Interior Minister Wolfgang Schaeuble warned a security conference in Berlin last week of the danger of attacks ahead of the election and, following the appearance of the video, the Interior Ministry released a statement indicating that the security services are on a higher state of alert because of the election. A police spokesperson added that "Al Qaida's direct threats to Germany have taken on a new quality since the beginning of the year." In response to indications of increased activity and travel among terrorist suspects in the past months, the government implemented a number of new security measures earlier this summer. The measures, which are similar to some of those put in place for the 2006 World Cup, include enhanced passenger checks at airports, increased surveillance of suspected Islamists, and outreach to colleges and universities to identify signs of radicalization (see reftel).

¶4. On September 20, media reported on the appearance of a second video featuring Harrach. The second video is 40 minutes long and entitled "Oh Allah, I love you." The video does not contain specific threats to Germany or any other country, rather it calls upon Muslims to "free themselves from sin" by joining and supporting jihad against western occupiers in Afghanistan.

¶5. Media quoted Interior Minister Schaeuble as warning against a change in the country's policies on Afghanistan, saying the Bundeswehr's presence there is not the cause of terrorist attacks. SPD parliamentarian Dieter Wiefelspuetz said such threats will not change Germany's Afghanistan policy: "We will not allow anybody to bomb us in a certain

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direction."  
Murphy